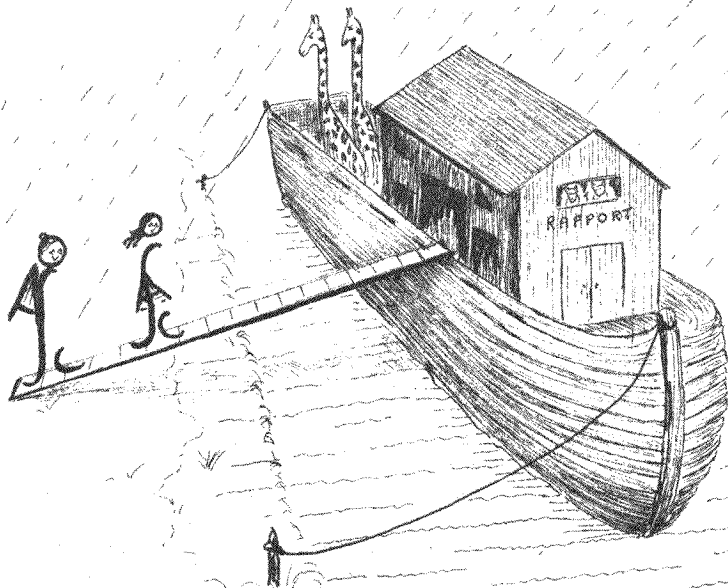


**AUTO-SLEEPER
OWNERS' CLUB**



NEWSLETTER 53

FEBRUARY 1993

Hello.

RENEWALS

February already and time to remind you that, if you haven't renewed your membership of the Club, this is the last Newsletter you will receive. (Pause while there is a quick check on whether you have renewed or not!) If you have renewed by standing order, have you completed and sent your renewal notice to *Sheila*? Yes, you DID get one, it was with the December Newsletter. It was the pinkish bit of paper which was in the same envelope. And if you haven't already sent it in, will you do so now? Also please complete ALL the spaces, including the model and registration number of your van. Don't forget to sign it too! (I know that it sounds as though I'm trying to teach you to suck eggs, but you would be surprised!) If you have "lost" the form, not to worry. Just write to *Sheila* giving your name, address, telephone number, membership number, van type and registration number and say whether you pay by standing order or cheque. If the latter, please enclose the cheque. The renewal form helps the Club to maintain an up-to-date list of members. So please help!

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Change to AGM Venue

Some of the renewal notices have contained comments and suggestions which will be collated and brought to the attention of the committee when the list can be finalised. But one or two comments have been received about the change of venue for the AGM from Somerset to Kettering. Your committee is well aware that this change does not suit everybody but the Club had no real option in the matter as we couldn't make the proper arrangements at our first choice. It is rather difficult to obtain a suitable venue for a Club the size of ours which is reasonably central for as many members as possible. As was shown on the Questionnaire, some people think that we have too many rallies in the North or South or East or West or Midlands or Anywhere Else not convenient but we do try to spread all of them around. No doubt most of us would rather like to travel about 50 miles or so to get to the AGM but for many of us this would be impossible. So your AGM sub-committee did their very best in the time available after it was found that the Somerset-site was causing difficulties and made the arrangements for Kettering. If you think that this is out of the way or too far from anywhere, why not try to find a suitable site for such a meeting which is more suitable for all the members? If you can find one, please let any committee member know and you can rest assured that investigations will be made for the 1994 AGM. Yes, we are already thinking ahead!

INDEX

Rather late, I'm afraid, but the index for issues 42-48 is now ready. If you would like a copy, please send me a stamped, addressed envelope of sufficient size to take a Newsletter and a copy will be sent immediately.

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Tow Bar including electrics to fit VW Transporter Trident/Trooper 1980/89. £40.00 ono. Please telephone Brian Metcalfe on 0602 264 112 or write to him at 76 Chippenham Road, Bestwood Park, Nottingham, NG5 5SS.

#####

Ford Legend GL. 5,200 miles only. May 1991. As new condition, all GL facilities. Omnimax aerial, Nudge bar, wheel clamp. Carefully used by non-smokers. No pets. £18,500 o.v.n.o. Full details available from Harry Semple, 4 Raymond Close, Holbury, Southampton, Hants., SO4 1GH or telephone him on 0703 893 131

Harry kindly sent a donation to Club funds for this advertisement. As I have often said in the past, payment is NOT necessary although it is, of course, much appreciated.

#####

Legend GL Automatic May, 1992 (J). Only 4,260 miles. Non-smokers and no animals. Complete with Silver Screen, 2 covers for wheels, 3 x 7kg gas bottles (empty), TV aerial and booster panel, Electric hook-up cable, Haden kettle. Has always been kept in a garage. £20,000. (I don't really want to say goodbye to it.) Also 4 locking hub caps to fit above. Cost when new £25 each. Offers invited. Please contact Margaret Howell on 0584 875 788 or write to her at 75 Charlton Rise, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1ND.

[Genuine reason for sale - see obituaries - Ed.]

#####

Having sold the van the following are now "Surplus to Requirements". Porta-Potti, small, as supplied with van £40. Mains hook-up lead on roll £15. Silver Screen to fit Transit £50. "Eurovent" side - fitting annexe tent £50. Near offers may be considered - telephone Pat

Finch on 021 358 3377 or write to him at "Tethers End", 85 Green Lane, Great Barr, Birmingham, B43 5LE

#####

Commer AutoSleeper 1977. One previous owner. In excellent condition with awning. Taxed to July 1993, MOT to March 1993. 3 berth. Fully equipped. 60,000 miles. Offers invited around £1,900. Reason for sale - retirement.

S. Pearson, 3 Dean Court, Kitt Green, Wigan, WN5. (That's all the Postcode given!)

#####

Fiat Ducato Rambler, 2 litre petrol, E' reg, 1988. 31,433 miles. Good condition. Full Service History. One owner from new. Full Rambler specification. Runs on unleaded fuel. £9,000 o.v.n.o. Telephone Danny Lamont on 0924 462 696 or write to him at 249 Wakefield Road, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, WF12 8ET.

Danny also enclosed a donation for this advertisement - many thanks.

#####

Talisman GL Diesel 1992 "J" Reg. Immaculate condition inside and outside. Non-smokers. 12,500 miles. £21,000.00. Telephone Ray Corah on 0773 852 333 or write to him at Packhorse Cottage, Jackass Lane, Alderwasley, Derbyshire, DE4 4GD.

#####

30 litre Gas Tank - refillable with L.P.G. (Propane) - plus all fittings. Suitable for Talisman type van. Test certificate available. Reason for sale:- it would not quite fit under a Rambler! £210. Contact Steve Bowler on 021 745 8369. (Other tanks are also available to order.)

#####

1985 Talisman. 2 litre petrol. 42,000 miles. 2 berth with overcab cupboards. Very good condition, regularly serviced. Many extras. £11,500. Telephone Bruce Clarke on 0433 651 783 or write to him at 5 The Crofts, Hathersage, Sheffield, S30 1DG.

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New Kids on the Block

"We are the proud owners of a new Trident and new members of the Club. We have not yet got into the rally game but having spent several weekends in Dorset, Hampshire, Gwent and Norfolk we

are ready to meet the experts. We are very interested in offering help and getting involved.

We need some advice. We are planning a trip to Madrid at Easter with two friends. They will sleep in the awning en-route but have their own accommodation at Vialba. Normally we have no problem carrying all our bits but with the extra luggage and passengers we are looking at our roof rack! It does not look too useful as it has the roof light in the middle. We have looked for a means of fitting bars across that will clear the opening roof vent but with no success. We have a trailer but would prefer not to use it as it would mean having a tow bar fitted. We shall be crossing from Portsmouth to Le Havre and motoring down the western coast of France to the border and then Motorway to Madrid (Vialba - 60 miles north).

Any hints for the journey will be appreciated as this is our first trip abroad with the camper although we have motored on the continent by car.

*Janet & John
(You may have read our books!)
Williams"*

I have a beautiful picture in my mind of the Trident motoring along some quiet road in France with the awning fully extended and two people sound asleep inside! I hope they've got wheels on their sleeping bags!! And when you manage to find an "expert" among the members, please let us know. After all, "Experts" can't do half the things that our members can.

Seriously though, if you can help with advice on the roof rack question or on the route to be taken please telephone the *Williams-es-es-es* on 0932 782 851.

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EASTER WEEKEND RALLY



Bookings should be made now.

Due to ground damage in earlier floods, this is now at BILTON GRANGE SCHOOL at Dunchurch near Rugby. It is being run by the Chairman of the Landliner Club, so is attracting all the major motorcaravan clubs. You could make a week's holiday out of it, staying Monday to Thursday at another site, finishing at our AGM and National Rally at Kettering, which is not far away, on the Friday.

Dates: 10:00 am on Friday 9th April to 6:00 pm on Monday 12th.
Price - £15 per unit (2 adults, up to 3 children, dogs allowed on

leads). Tickets to evening entertainment on Friday and Saturday (which is a fancy dress Country & Western night) are included in the price. It is a green field site with marked pitches. Quiet generators allowed during the day. Toilets available.

Numerous competitions and attractions are being laid on for all the family, plus a craft show and large antiques & collectors fair. Coach trips to nearby towns too. Full details will be sent to you after booking.

To book, please forward your cheque, payable to "RUGBY DUNSMORE ROTARY CLUB", with the number of adults, children and pets you are bringing. Mark your booking clearly "A.S.O.C" or "Auto-Sleeper" so that our plot is big enough. Send it to:- Tom Lewis, 16 Almond Close, Barby, Rugby, CV23 8TL.

The ASOC marshals will be *Carol & Steve Bowler*. Is anyone prepared to assist or run a follow-on rally? Tel: 021 745 8369 with any queries/special needs.

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Going Abroad

Betty & I will be going to the continent roughly about the last week in May 1993 by the early morning ferry from Dover to Calais. We will travel from there to Switzerland on the N & D roads in France and in Switzerland we will use the motorways for part of the journey. Their motorways are not free but a permit can be bought at the border posts, I believe.

From the French border we will go to Lausanne, Montreux, Zermatt (for the Matterhorn) then to Interlaken for the short drive to the Jungfrau. After this we will go to Lucerne, Zurich and Konstanz.

When we enter Austria there is no charge for motorways travel (except for a few which we will not use) but we will pass through the Arlsberg Tunnel for which there is a charge. After that we pass Innsbruck and go to a campsite about half way between there and Saizburg in the middle of the Austrian Tyrol. We feel that this site cannot be equalled anywhere in Europe. We will stay there for about a week and then start on our way home via Germany, Belgium and so to Calais.

We do not wish to lead a convoy across Europe but would like to know if any Club member would like to accompany us. The trip will take about eight to ten weeks probably. I don't know how much

it will cost or what the distances are. There will be no language difficulties. We do not have any time table and it would not be necessary for any member to stay with the others all the time. If they wished to go home early that would be up to them. What do other members think? We shall be going on this trip anyway and others would be welcome to join us.

Betty & Jim Cordell.

This sounds just the sort of thing that some people would really enjoy because the hassle of choosing places to go can be completely overcome. If you would like to talk to *Jim*, please ring him on 0742 361 991 which is a Sheffield number. As he says he does NOT want to lead a "Wagon Train" but this would be much more like the trip to the Dutch Bulb Fields where people sort of joined up on a daily basis rather than travelled completely as a group. If you haven't risked taking your van abroad before and you have the time to spare - well...!

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And more advice required on Going Abroad

Can any member recommend a camp site in the Amsterdam area? We are planning to go either in April or May of this year for five days and want to book in advance.

We would like a site where we can leave the van and go into Amsterdam by public transport. Electric hook-up is required, hard standing would also be an asset.

Thank you.

Jackie Boltwood

If anyone can help, please telephone *Jackie* on 081 807 9564 as there isn't too much time to write to her. [This seems to be to be a particular area for our Chairman to show his paces as he led the trip to the Bulb fields and therefore knows *ALL* about Holland! - Ed.]

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SUGGESTIONS WANTED

"We are about to plan our first trip into Italy in September and wonder if any members who have travelled there can pass on any information on interesting places and camp sites. We hope to visit Venice, Pisa, Florence and possibly Rome. We only have three weeks holiday from start to finish.

Pauline & David Lepper."

Any suggestions can be passed to our venturesome friends by telephoning 0483 480 413.

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Obituaries

Elsie Brazier has told us that her husband *Edward* has died. *Sylvia Thirwell* has also died. And *Margaret Howell* wrote to say that her husband *Mick* had died very suddenly on 23rd December 1992.

All three of these were early joiners of the Club and our sympathies and condolences go to their families.

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TROOPING IN AMERICA - PARTS 5 & 6

"Continuing eastbound along I. 20 the scenery changed again to a greener landscape with increasing woods and lakes. More oilfields appeared with their nodding "donkeys" together with several oil refineries. We spend three days in Dallas and while *Pete* got up to date with the latest in Business Aviation *Jenny* visited the West End, toured the city on the "hop-a-Bus" and both of us enjoyed the Catherine the Great Exhibition at the State Fair Ground. The local VW dealer completed a while-u-wait oil and filter change while the salesman gave the Trooper a critical eye. "It would sell like hot cakes over here" was their verdict!

Still on I. 20 we camped at Shreveport and stopped at Vicksburg overlooking the great bridges crossing the Mississippi and the site of bloody battles in the Civil War. Under overcast skies we passed increasing numbers of white bloomed cotton fields and saw the first steps in harvesting the "cotton bolls" and, as it was getting late, we decided to give the non-KOA camp site at Jackson a try. Arriving at "Bob's - \$8 a nite - why pay more?" we took a quick look, made a U-turn and continued to KOA Montgomery in the dark. The yellow "beam-benders" proved invaluable against the oncoming traffic. Next morning we saw the Civil Rights memorial, visited the First White House of the Confederacy and learned something of the civil war and Jefferson Davis.

As you cross each State Line the tourist shops are to be recommended for maps and things to see, as are the Tourist Houses in each city. The AAA Tourist offices are most helpful to AA members. Keeping accurate US gallon/mileage/octane figures shows we may be getting 2 mpg more when running on 92 octane than we do on 89 octane. Comments, anyone?

Turning north to Birmingham, Alabama, the fine asphalt roads cut through undulating, wooded landscapes with a much more prosperous look about the area. The KOA site at Birmingham turned out to be new and really splendid. We stayed 3 nights and visited the laser light show in the De Soto caverns first discovered in 1540. [The caverns, not the lights! - Ed.] These ancient Indian burial grounds have seen more recent use for mining minerals for gunpowder for the Civil War and for the making of "Moonshine" during the years of prohibition! A day at the Oak Ridge State Park saw us paddling a canoe on the lake.

After visiting fiends in Tennessee and seeing how corn whiskey is made at the Jack Daniels Distillery (a "dry" county so we had a "tippie" of lemonade to finish the tour!) we turned west again along the gently winding roads of US.64 to Memphis. Back on the US.40 we continued into Arkansas, where the well worn concrete freeways gave us a "clippety clip" ride reminiscent of railway journeys of long ago, as we followed the cut of the river through Little Rock to Fort Smith.

A 3 night stop in Wichita coincided with a night long thunderstorm but we were snug in our Marriott Hotel! Then across the wide plains of Kansas using the turnpike highway to Topeka (\$4.15 toll). At Grantville we found the only KOA site with washbasin plugs, soap and a hand drier! Rest stops on the turnpike are placed between the opposite direction carriageways with fuel and MacDonald's or Hardee's fast food outlets.

The major milestone of completing 10,000 miles since we left Halifax, Nova Scotia, occurred as we crossed the Missouri River just west of Columbia as we were heading towards St. Louis.

Southern States.

Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi.

Labor Day, the first Monday of September, marks the end of the summer vacations. Facilities are noticeably much quieter now. Most attractions and camp sites remain open while State Fairs, festivals and other special events are still happening.

Roads down here are long, straight, level, well sign posted and quiet. With a street map and a bit of forward planning even downtown Dallas was manageable. Along the Interstate highways are rest areas with picnic tables, toilets and water. On entering a new State there will be a "Welcome" site with hospitality and information about the State. It is necessary to leave the highway at designated

junctions for fuel, restaurants and travel requirements.

The scenery has gradually been changing as we go east from desert cacti through citrus groves, horticulture, cotton fields and grazing to dense pine forest with green fields here in Alabama.

The weather was uncomfortably hot for us in Arizona, Texas and New Mexico at 100° F during the day and still around 80° F at night. Everyone dashes out of the heat into the air conditioned indoors, anything which provides shade meanwhile is much sought after. Rise very early, do as little as possible midday and make use of the air conditioning in the shopping malls and restaurants, then lastly cool off at the camp site swimming pool. We have a small 12v fan in the camper; it helped only a little. Aim to be at your destination before nightfall which comes early and suddenly with only a slight drop in temperature, then early to bed.

Louisiana and Mississippi were still uncomfortably hot and also humid with it together with the misery of the biting insects. We passed through as quickly as possible. Otherwise just use a motel in these conditions for \$30 and upwards per room per night. Here in Alabama at the end of September the conditions are ideal like mid-summer back home with cool nights but darkness falls at about 6.00 pm.

Because we have the locations list of KOA camp sites, we have used them throughout. The AAA has lists of recommended sites and most State Parks have sites, some primitive and some improved. The KOA sites all have swimming pools, recreation rooms, laundry facilities, clean wash-rooms with hot showers, full or partial electric hook-ups, a shop and some have a night security patrol. They vary in type, some being wooded and shady while others are more open. They can be remote or near to a town, peaceful or noisy, well worn or brand new; the nightly tariff reflects the popularity of the site; from \$10 to \$25.

Our VW Trooper is serving us well even though we are unable to hook up to the 110v electricity nor did we ever convert to the propane gas. We use a single burner portable stove and do not store perishable foods. Eating out is good and affordable therefore we do not cook in the van very often. Sharing the driving means that 300 miles is a comfortable day's journey at an average speed of 50 mph, giving us excellent fuel consumption. This still leaves time for sight seeing, lazing about and socialising. Everyone is friendly, welcoming and helpful and I will finish with a frequently heard saying:

"Now y'all come on down here!"

Jenny & Peter Berry.



Dicing with Death
or
Keep your Burners CLEAN!



This is ancient history, a tale of pre-Rambler days, but some may find it amusing - even thought provoking. We'd had a good holiday, our usual month in France, most of it spent near Les Sables D'Olonne. Now we were on our way back heading for the ferry at Calais. It was our penultimate night, at a campsite in an insignificant town about 100 miles south of Calais.

We bought a few things, including some pears and a litre of milk. We always have a drink of warm milk before turning in so I put the usual amount in a pan and warmed it up. It promptly turned solid. As a joke I said, "We'll have junket instead." We both tried it; it was not only sour it had a most horrible taste so we slung it.

We turned in. Sometime later I had a funny dream. I thought I was back in Lowestoft, and the air was full of the smell of the local kipper smoke house. I woke up and the smell was real so obviously there was a factory or something nearby producing a funny smell. We were both wide awake feeling ill with sore throats and runny noses. There was nothing we could do about it so we tried to sleep.

We felt worse and worse - something was clearly wrong. We had neglected to wash the pears before eating them so were we poisoned by a spray residue on the skins? Had the milk been tampered with? There had been some cases of people poisoning baby food in England recently. How stupid we had been to taste it when it obviously had something wrong with it. All sorts of panicking thoughts went through our minds. The night wore on. At one stage *Dorothy* went to the toilet and I asked her if the fridge was behaving properly. "Oh yes, there is a good bright red glow". I was satisfied but we were beginning to feel really ill. Eventually at about 7 O'clock we decided to have our morning tea. *Dorothy* got out of bed, took one step towards the cooker, said "I feel most peculiar" and collapsed on the bed.

I took command of the situation. First aid was clearly needed. She had fainted and it was important that I did the right thing in this emergency, but what? Inspiration came, my mind cleared and the right thing to do became apparent. "I will make the tea instead of her." I climbed over her prostrate body and went to the cooker. It was obvious that the smell was stronger near the fridge. I turned it off and opened all doors and windows. With fresh air coming in

Dorothy slowly recovered and was able to sit up. We had our tea and took stock of the situation. We were still very shaky but clearly getting better and would probably be none the worse for our experience. We were due on our ferry about mid-day the next day. Should we stay put for the day and make a quick run the next morning? I decided not to because we could cruise the hundred miles to Calais in easy stages and get there in good time so that is what we did.

Reviewing the episode several points emerged. A few days earlier we had noticed that the cooker burners were sooting up a bit but did not think much about it. I am sure we had a bottle of "dirty" gas although it was a properly sealed one bought in a respectable shop in Les Sables. The really frightening thought was the realisation that the first effect had been to make us complete idiots. When *Dorothy* had said that there was a good red glow from the fridge I should have realised that it normally has a blue flame and something was seriously wrong.

How easily we could have both passed out completely and lain there dead to the world - perhaps even dead. It would have been days before anyone would have thought to check on a van with the curtains drawn. The milk? Probably a totally irrelevant coincidence that it was a bad carton.

At home I serviced the fridge. The whole burner and flue were completely blocked with soot. I cleaned it up, reassembled it and it worked perfectly ever after.

Nial Reynolds."

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Thank You

If you have space would you please say thank you to all members who sent letters, cards and good wishes to *Vic* during his recent spell in hospital. He's had his operation and is now making an excellent recovery.

We are looking forward to meeting many friends at the Fell End rally in March. Here's hoping that it's the start of a happy, healthy, safe year of motor caravanning for all A.S.O.C. members.

Kindest regards to all.

Barbara & Vic Kaye."

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1993

The Rally List is here at last,
Get out the Frisky, that was fast!
We've travelled the country, North, South, East and West,
Looking at rallies we think will be best.
"Have wheels, Will travel" and we do so, I fear.
We MUST go to Beverley, it was great last year.
Here we come, Lytham (*Norman*, don't run!)
Brian & June will be there - we'll have fun!
There's one at Whitchurch, that's worth knowing,
Just mention CAR WASH, that gets *Syd* going.
There's *Ben, Evelyn, Audrey, and Margaret and Brent*
And many more that the ASOC's have sent.
We had a fantastic year in '92
And we hope that all ralliers did so too.
Don't forget *Barbara & John, Auntie Brenda and Uncle Ken*
(I hope you didn't throw that tea-bag away, *Ben!*)
There's the *Wane's, George & Daisy*; we must go to that,
Fell End here we come, we'll be introduced to *Jack!*

Pam & Mick Robinson."

There's something about our fine Club, I contend,
That seems to change strangers we meet to a friend.
And, better than that, people pick up a pen
To jot down their thoughts on their trips now and then.
They write stuff in prose and in poetry too,
On paper of differing sizes and hue.
But ALL is received, as you've often heard said,
With gratitude by:
Yours sincerely,
your Ed.!

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Chairman's Chat

The time is fast approaching for cleaning-up in your van in readiness for the 1993 season. At this time last year I found some of the woodwork in the kitchen of my van had become discoloured by water staining. It was freshened up by first using "Colron Restorer and Cleaner" to dissolve the old finish and to remove any wax polish. When the treated area had dried it was rubbed down with sandpaper - flour grade - to produce a smooth finish. After

making sure all was dust-free. "Ronseal all-in-one wood finish" was applied with a rag to restore the colour and provide a sheen protective coating; several coatings were applied until a good match was made with the surrounding woodwork. On my Rambler I used the Pine coloured wood finish and this gave me a very good match. When all was thoroughly dry a natural wax polish was used (not a spray wax) to protect the repair from further water damage.

Linda Loughnane, in the last Newsletter, wrote about her problems with the Electrolux fridge and your Editor asked about a trip to the North Cape to see whether the 'blast furnace' would be of benefit there. It's a while since we were at the North Cape - it was just like a building site on our visit. But we have been beyond the Arctic Circle for quite a long time on several occasions. We did not want any extra heat in the van because it was so hot outside, except at the village of Jokkmok where the temperature plummeted down to 37°F from the middle 70's which we had been experiencing.

We do agree that the heat from the fridge can be a bit of a nuisance but we do appreciate having the food kept fresh and the drinks kept cool in it and so can put up with the 'blast furnace'. We found the latter to be a welcome addition to our electric heater when we were at the Wythall camp site for our recent committee meeting weekend. Perhaps other members, having been away around the New Year, may be able to give their reactions, especially as the temperatures have been down to -10°C.

No doubt by now you have received your holiday and ferry brochures and are spending time planning your holidays for this year whether at home or abroad. May I ask you to leave your planning aside for a short while and to complete your Booking Form for the National Rally and AGM on 16th-18th April. Send it off as soon as possible to *Heather Tidbury* and so help her with her part in the arrangements.

For the National Rally we have again been given considerable help by Wicksteed Park who have allowed us the use of the facilities of the Pavilion for the whole weekend without charge because we are having our Annual Dinner there on the Saturday evening. In consequence Club members will be able to have sandwiches at the Welcome Party on Friday evening and coffee on Sunday morning included in the overall cost of the weekend. I do look forward to seeing you all at Wicksteed Park.

When you get back to your holiday planning perhaps you may also like to plan where you are going to store your new Customs Allowances in the van. These changes follow the EC's Directive from 1st January 1993. Where are you going to put Two Hundred

and Twenty 6-packs of beer, Ten cartons of wine, and 13.3 bottles of spirits plus your cigarettes or tobacco on your return journey across the Channel? A bigger problem may be the cost!! And don't forget that these allowances are just for **ONE** person - I leave you to further speculation on the problem of accommodating your partner's allowances!!!

Arthur Irving ."

Maybe *Winifred and Arthur* will need to get A-S to build a special vehicle for them - a Rambler body on the front end of a huge articulated flat-bed truck! Then they could carry all their luvly smuggle! In his accompanying letter, *Arthur* pointed out that your Editor is living in somewhat of a polygamous state. See the January MMM on pages 44 and 139 to see what he means! Perhaps *John Hunt* can point out to the powers that now be at MMM that we **DID** make it legal last year.

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Pressure Gauges, Mattresses etc.

"Ref. the December Newsletter. I too can commend the tyre pressure gauge from Powerfit - excellent for use with turbo-diesel Talisman tyres.

I read *Pat Johnson's* comments about his Talisman bedding with interest. We have had a similar problem but dealt with it in a different way. I quite agree that the Talisman seating is on the hard side for sleeping. This is OK for me but too hard for my wife. Like the *Johnsons* we must confess to being "young at heart" oldies and we too like to sleep longitudinally. So to soften my wife's side I have obtained a slim mattress made to my specification - 51" x 27" x 2" - by a firm called "Foam for Comfort" Ltd, 401 Otley Old Road, Cookridge, Leeds, LS16 7DF (Tel: 0532 673 770) in Dunlopillo Latex. This comfy mattress lives folded neatly in the Luton during the day and spreads exactly over the base seating at night - with the back rest, of course, removed in order to provide the 2'4" width mentioned by *Pat*. Presumably, however, they have discarded all four base cushions and replaced them with their softer seating. As I understand their description, they have chosen their new seating in two full-length cushions (rather than four) so as to avoid any joins/bumps - although this arrangement seems to sacrifice the ability to convert the inward facing settees into two forward facing seats, for which all four base cushions are needed. We enjoy this layout for meals for two or four people with the cab seats turned round and the tables placed between them and the rear seats. Our mattress, of course, is quite flat and eliminates any joins/bumps for

my wife at night.

My wife needs to have her legs raised a little for medical reasons so "Foam for Comfort" have also made a wedge shaped cushion to my measurements (6" sloping down to 1"). They are a very helpful firm who I hope are still in business although I've not had occasion to check up on them recently.

Tom Charing-Pearce ."

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 **DRIVE-AWAY TENTS** 

Ted Goodread, our 1,000th member, has written with a query about the suitability of a Harrison Hitop Drive Away Tent for use with a Talisman. He has written to Harrison but they are unable to say whether it is suitable. His three local stockists do not have a tent in stock. Can anyone tell *Ted* whether that tent is suitable? Please write to him at 41, Stubbington Lane, Stubbington, Fareham, Hants, PO14 2PN or telephone him on 0329 661 360 if you can help.

He also tells me that he seems to have spent 1992 either preparing for, being in, or recovering from a stay in hospital. Our very best wishes to to him for better health in 1993.

My thought is that the drive-away style of tent/annexe has been made with the smaller, rear door vans in mind. I have seen one used with a sliding-door VW but I don't think that I've ever seen one associated with a coachbuilt van. But I'm wide open to correction! I have always been amused by the term "Drive Away Tent". Doesn't it bring a picture to mind of leaving the van on site while you drive into town in the tent?

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**Power assisted Steering & Pongs
(but not necessarily together!)**

Norman Tamplin followed up Mr. Billingham of Peugeot-Talbot about retro fitting power assisted steering to his Talisman. The reply he receive stated: "I recommend that if you wish to have P.A.S. retrofitted to your vehicle you contact a local Peugeot-Talbot Express dealer who will be pleased to discuss this matter with you and give you a quote for this work. I am advised that all of the necessary parts are now available through Peugeot Parts Division." *Norman* suggested that this might be of interest to other members.

He also commented on the waste water problems mentioned by

Joy & Paul Utting in issue 52. Soon after he took delivery of his Talisman he fitted a 'U' trap under the sink - result - No Pong! He then fitted a 1" clear flow ball type valve to the outlet and 8' of 1 1/4" flex hose which stows behind the rear valence making emptying at disposal points very easy.

Is there no end to the cleverness of our members?

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Irish Camp Site

Sheila received a letter from White Villa Farm. (Caravan Park and Apartments), Cork Road, Killarney, Co.Kerry, Ireland. They sent details of their family run caravan park which is situated on a 100 acre dairy farm and is registered with the Irish Tourist Board. They are offering Club members a 10% discount on their 1993 prices which seem to be (per night) £2.00 per unit plus £2.00 per adult and 25p per child during the high season plus £1.00 per night for electricity. During the low season the unit charge is reduced to £1.50 per night. A seven night booking for the price of 6 if fees paid on arrival.

I'm not quite sure whether the costs are British Pounds or Irish Puntis! But if you're going to Ireland and would like to book, write to Eileen and Jerry O'Donoghue at the address shown, mention A.S.O.C. and get a discount! I've been to Killarney and found it a very nice area for sight-seeing and touring generally. I liked it better than the Ring of Kerry which I thought was over-rated.

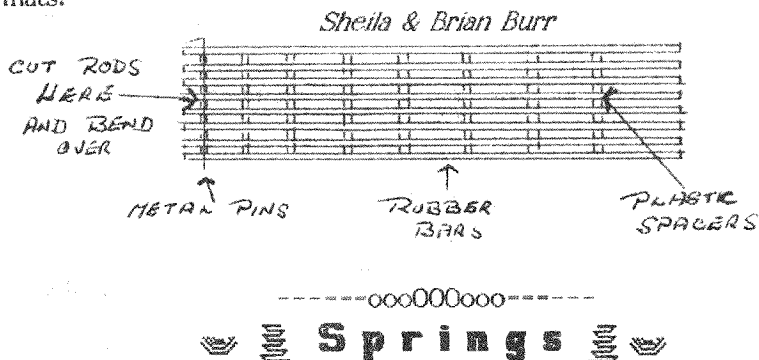
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Mud, Mud, Glorious Mud!

Can any member advise on the purchase of Front Mud Flaps to fit the standard Talbot cab? I know the obvious solution is to visit a Peugeot-Talbot dealer but they are only prepared to sell a set of four (for front and rear). The rear ones are not essential, nor suitable to fit to the glass fibre wheel arch. I'm sure other Talisman owners will agree that the body area just behind the cab quickly becomes filthy, especially if the front wheels are fighting for grip on wet grass etc. I feel that front mud flaps should be fitted as standard bearing in mind the cost of our vehicles.

On the subject of front wheel traction, I have devised a remedy which appears to work well on wet grass. I utilised a couple of second-hand outdoor rubber mats (I don't know their correct name, I call them Link Mats). They consist of hard rubber strips joined together with metal rods which have plastic spacers between them. The mats are then attached to 6" x 1" boards with heavy duty staples. To economise, I cut the mats in half, which means removing a row of spacers and bending the metal pins over at the ends. We find

the ideal place to carry the mats in our Talisman is on the floor in front of the fridge. The sketch below will give an indication of the mats.



I was very interested in the letters regarding squeaking rear springs. Although I have only just joined the Club I have had a caravan since 1959 and a motor van since 1975. Our current van is a Talisman GL on the Peugeot-Talbot chassis purchased in February 1990. The three previous A-S vans have all been on the VW chassis. No problems were encountered with the VW's but this is the one and only P-T which I shall buy. After I bought it I drove to Spain and the first service was carried out by a garage in Benisa Alicante.

Not only was it impossible to get rid of the squeak from somewhere under the rear of the chassis but it was equally impossible to cure the 1st and 2nd gear problem. After many visits for both problems to different garages in the UK we receive the same answer - "Design fault, nothing we can do". I shall now call on my local service depot complete with the January Newsletter !

Readers may also have seen in the January issue of MMM yet another letter regarding the gear change. It would appear that a reader has had satisfaction from DD Motorhomes in Uckfield, Sussex. He states that the results were a complete transformation facilitating the engagement of ANY gear!. Perhaps I shall never again have the problem of changing down to 1st going up Porlock or climbing one of the hairpin bends in the Pyrenees.

John Sutton

I hope that you let us know how you get on, *John*, when you have visited your dealer. It's nice to know that the Newsletter can be flaunted at dealers now!

Gas again - Propane and Butane.

You may recall, in Newsletters 31 and 32, this subject was brought up with the problems associated with these two different gases. The main question was whether an appliance set to burn one gas could safely use the other without some adjustment. *Melvyn Crapp* has now written to state that the argument still continues!

"I enclose an extract from MMM (October 1992) where no less a person than a member of BOC also says that appliances will need adapting. I wrote to MMM on the lines of this summary. "Regarding the letter from Roger Palmer of BOC on P8 of the October '92 issue, with respect, I do not feel that Mr. Palmer has "resolved the confusion". Indeed I feel that further clarification is now needed.

There must be many motor caravanners happily using both types of gas without modifying their equipment. Mr. Palmer seems to be stating that an element of danger is involved, but it hardly seems realistic to expect EACH caravan owner who wants to use propane to write to EACH manufacturer, even assuming he can find out the name and address of each one.

I suggest two things should be done:

1. MMM should commission research to find out from appliance manufacturers whether each of their appliances can be used with both butane and propane - and if not, what modifications are needed.
2. Every manufacturer of caravans and motor caravans should also ascertain the above information from the makers of appliances they install. This should then be included in their operation manuals."

This will be published in MMM in the March issue together with the Editor's comments which she tells me you are free to quote provided that you acknowledge MMM.

Although this may not completely resolve the question, it does, I think, go some way and if the manufacturers will now do their part, there need be much less worry all round. I hope this will be helpful."

The Editor of MMM, whose efforts I gladly acknowledge on such an important subject, said "Roger Palmer stated in our October issue that converting an existing butane system to propane would mean adapting the appliances to different operating pressure and burner settings. Alde, Carver, Electrolux and Propex have confirmed to me

that there is not a problem with any of their appliances in changing from butane to propane and vice versa. Calor stated that some items of equipment might benefit from burner adjustment but that there would be no DANGER involved in not having such an adjustment done - merely a lowering of efficiency. I agree with your suggestion that this information should be included in operation manuals; manufacturers please take note!

Now I can quite understand that a different regulator must be used for each gas because the storage pressures and "gassing off" temperatures are different. But wouldn't it be of great use to all of us if the manufacturers of the various types of appliances would tell us, in simple terms, just what adjustment might need to be done to the burners to get the best out of each gas WITHOUT DANGER. Is it a simple thing like half a turn of a screw somewhere or does it really need a complete burner replacement. Or are we trying hard to get back to the age old problem in the car world of "Check the tyre pressures, fill the petrol tank, for all other matters take the vehicle to your dealer"? I suggest that we have all spent quite a bit of cash on these vehicles, whether trailer or motor, and we should be able to expect the answers to the questions we raise to be explained to us. Come along, gas pundits everywhere, let us know just where we stand - before we blow up in more ways than one!

Many thanks, *Melvyn*, for keeping this important matter in the front of the news. If anyone hears anything further, please let me know for later issues. Or shall we all go back to coal/coke stoves in the vans and tow small trailers with the fuel aboard?

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Once again, that's it! - Cheerio from - Your Editor
Harry Henthorne
144, Devonshire Hill Lane, London, N17 7NH.
Tel: 081-808 9112

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